

1. (ORIGINAL) A prophylactic/therapeutic agent for bone and joint diseases, comprising a compound or its salt that inhibits the activity of a protein having an amino acid sequence which is the same or substantially the same as the amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 1, its partial peptide, or a salt thereof.

2. (ORIGINAL) A prophylactic/therapeutic agent for bone and joint diseases, comprising a compound or its salt that inhibits the expression of a gene for a protein having an amino acid sequence which is the same or substantially the same as the amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 1, its partial peptide, or a salt thereof.

3. (ORIGINAL) A prophylactic/therapeutic agent for bone and joint diseases, comprising an antisense nucleotide having a base sequence which is complementary or substantially complementary to the base sequence of a polynucleotide encoding a protein having an amino acid sequence which is the same or substantially the same as the amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 1, or its partial peptide, or a part of the base sequence.

4. (ORIGINAL) A prophylactic/therapeutic agent for bone and joint diseases, comprising an antibody to a protein having an amino acid sequence which is the same or substantially the same as the amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 1, its partial peptide, or a salt thereof.

5. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The prophylactic/therapeutic agent according to claim 1 ~~[, 2, 3 or 4,]~~ wherein the bone and joint diseases are chondrodysplasia, bone dysplasia, osteoporosis, osteoarthritis, chronic articular rheumatism, arthritis, synovitis, metabolic arthropathy or sports-related joint disorders.

6. (ORIGINAL) A diagnostic agent for bone and joint diseases, comprising an antibody to a protein having an amino acid sequence which is the same or substantially the same as the amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 1, its partial peptide, or a salt thereof.

7. (ORIGINAL) A diagnostic agent for bone and joint diseases, comprising a polynucleotide encoding a protein having an amino acid sequence which is the same or substantially the same as the amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 1, or its partial peptide.

8. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The diagnostic agent according to claim 6 ~~or 7~~, wherein the bone and joint diseases are chondrodysplasia, bone dysplasia, osteoporosis, osteoarthritis, chronic articular rheumatism, arthritis, synovitis, metabolic arthropathy or sports-related joint disorders.

9. (ORIGINAL) A prophylactic/therapeutic agent for bone and joint diseases, comprising a compound or its salt having an action of inhibiting a sulfatase activity.

10. (ORIGINAL) A prophylactic/therapeutic agent for bone and joint diseases, comprising a compound or its salt having an action of inhibiting the expression of a sulfatase.

11. (ORIGINAL) A method of screening a prophylactic/therapeutic agent for bone and joint diseases, which comprises using a protein having an amino acid sequence which is the same or substantially the same as the amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 1, its partial peptide, or a salt thereof.

12. (ORIGINAL) A kit for screening a prophylactic/therapeutic agent for bone and joint diseases, comprising a protein having an amino acid sequence which is the same or substantially the same as the amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 1, its partial peptide, or a salt thereof.

13. (ORIGINAL) A method of screening a prophylactic/therapeutic agent for bone and joint diseases, which comprises using a polynucleotide encoding a protein having an amino acid sequence which is the same or substantially the same as the amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 1, or its partial peptide.

14. (ORIGINAL) A kit for screening a prophylactic/therapeutic agent for bone and joint diseases, comprising a polynucleotide encoding a protein having an amino acid sequence which is the same or substantially the same as the amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 1, or its partial peptide.

15. (CANCELLED)

16. (ORIGINAL) A method of preventing/treating bone and joint diseases, which comprises administering to a mammal an effective dose of a compound or its salt that inhibits the activity of a protein having an amino acid sequence which is the same or substantially the same as the amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 1, its partial peptide, or a salt thereof, or an effective dose of a compound or its salt that inhibits the expression of a gene for the protein.

17. (ORIGINAL) A method of preventing/treating bone and joint diseases, which comprises inhibiting the activity of a protein having an amino acid sequence which is the same or substantially the same as the amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 1, its partial peptide, or a salt thereof, or inhibiting the expression of a gene for the protein.

18. (ORIGINAL) Use of a compound or its salt that inhibits the activity of a protein having an amino acid sequence which is the same or substantially the same as the amino acid sequence represented by SEQ ID NO: 1, its partial peptide, or a salt thereof, or a compound or its salt that inhibits the expression of a gene for the protein, to manufacture a prophylactic/therapeutic agent for bone and joint diseases.